


NAEHCY Annual Conference




The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) will be hosting its 17th annual national conference in New Orleans, LA, on October 22-25, 2005. The conference theme will be “Everyone Believing—Every Child Achieving!”. The conference will feature policy updates, effective practices, and networking among federal, state, and local program coordinators, educators, advocates, and service providers.

NAEHCY is a national grassroots membership association that serves as the voice and social conscience for the education of children and youth in homeless situations. For more information about NAEHCY membership or its annual conference, visit www.naehcy.org.

State and Local Contacts

Every state has a State Coordinator for Homeless Education. To find out who the coordinator is for your state, visit www.serve.org/nche/downloads/sccontact.pdf.

Every district also has a Local Homeless Education Liaison. To find out who the liaison is for your district, use the district staff directory or contact your State Coordinator.




National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE
P.O. Box 5367
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NCHE
Spotlight

The Newsletter of the National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE
Vol. 1, Summer 2005

The National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE (NCHE) is an information and technical assistance center funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The Center equips educators and other service providers to remove educational barriers and improve educational opportunities and outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness.

A Note from the Director




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ddressing the complex needs of families, children, and youth experiencing homelessness requires a coordinated effort among educators, service providers, advocates, researchers, and policymakers. The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) seeks to ensure that all those whose work touches the lives of homeless families, children, and youth can access the most current information on research, data, and effective practices.

This publication is the first of an annual newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on the work and offerings of NCHE. We hope that the information included will enable you to learn more about issues related to the education of homeless children and youth, in areas of both policy and practice.

We invite you to visit the NCHE website (www.serve.org/nche), join the homeless education listserv (e-mail bhartnes@serve.org), or call our HelpLine (800-308-2145) to learn more about the education of homeless children and youth or to make us aware of resources from your area of expertise. We also invite you to share information about NCHE with your constituents and establish a link on your website to the NCHE website.

Our intent is to establish a network of individuals, agencies, and organizations that share a commitment to assisting families, children, and youth in homeless situations. Together, we can increase their access to services and help them overcome the devastating toll that homelessness takes on their lives. We thank you for your efforts in addressing the needs of this vulnerable population.

Sincerely,

Diana Bowman
dbowman@serve.org

The Role of the Local Homeless Education Liaison

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act mandates that every district in the country designate a Local Homeless Education Liaison. The liaison serves as one of the primary contacts between homeless families, school and district personnel, and service providers and ensures that the rights guaranteed homeless students under federal law are observed. Liaison responsibilities include:

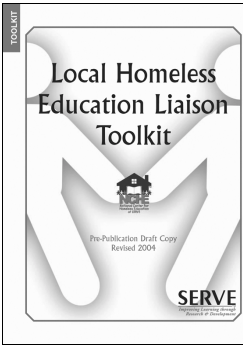
⇒ Identifying children and youth experiencing homelessness.

⇒ Ensuring the immediate enrollment of children and youth experiencing homelessness, even if they lack paperwork normally required for enrollment.

⇒ Informing parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth about the educational rights of homeless students, including the right to remain in and receive transportation to the school of origin when this is in the student’s best interest.

⇒ Ensuring that disputes regarding enrollment are resolved fairly and expeditiously.


⇒ Posting public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth in schools and public places.



Liaison Toolkit

These and other duties are explained in the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*, which can be ordered or downloaded at www.serve.org/nche/products.php.

Federal Education Law: Who Is Homeless?



Students qualify for the protections conferred by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act if they **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**. This includes students:

⇒ Living doubled-up with others due to economic hardship or loss of housing.

⇒ Living in hotels, motels, campgrounds, or inadequate trailer homes.

⇒ Living in emergency, transitional, or runaway shelters.


⇒ Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, or public spaces not intended for human habitation.

⇒ Abandoned in hospitals.

⇒ Awaiting foster care placement.

For more information, visit www.serve.org/nche/ibt/sc_eligibility.php.

Title X, Part C, No Child Left Behind Act



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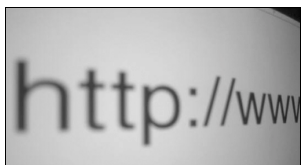
The McKinney-Vento Act: The Basics

The McKinney-Vento Act guarantees children and youth experiencing homelessness the following:

- ⇒ The right to immediate enrollment in school, even if lacking paperwork normally required for enrollment
- ⇒ The right to attend school in the school of origin (if this is requested by the parent and is in the student's best interest) or in the school of residence
- ⇒ The right to receive transportation to the school of origin
- ⇒ The right to services comparable to those received by housed schoolmates
- ⇒ The right to attend school with children not experiencing homelessness. Segregation based on a student's status as homeless is prohibited
- ⇒ The posting of homeless students' rights in all schools and other places around the community

For more information, visit www.serve.org/nche/briefs.php.

NCHE Upgrades Its Website: www.serve.org/nche



NCHE recently introduced its newly redesigned website. New features include friendlier navigation, an expansive “information by topic” section, online product ordering capability, and frequent site updates. Some of the main features of the site include:

- ⇒ **What's New?:** View upcoming events, new resources, and articles about homeless education published recently in local or national media.
- ⇒ **NCHE Services and Products:** View a list of NCHE publications and products, including training resources, issue briefs, awareness posters, and more. Learn about our homeless education listserv and HelpLine, and order NCHE products free of charge.
- ⇒ **Legislation:** Access full-text downloads of the McKinney-Vento Act and related legislation, such as NCLB, IDEA, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and others. Download Policy Guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, and view legislative resources such as issue briefs, government memos, and more.
- ⇒ **Online Forum:** Share resources with others working with children and youth experiencing homelessness. Content is submitted by practitioners, such as State Coordinators for Homeless Education and Local Homeless Education Liaisons. Resources include sample forms, awareness and training materials, local policies, and more.
- ⇒ **State and Local Resources:** Access homeless education resources by state, including State Coordinator contact information and state homeless education program websites.
- ⇒ **Information by Topic:** Locate information on specific topics related to homeless education, such as school enrollment, unaccompanied youth, free school meals, and dispute resolution.

Contact Christina Dukes at cdukes@serve.org with questions or comments about the website.

Awareness Resources at Your Fingertips

Generating awareness of the educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness is one of the priorities of the McKinney-Vento Act. The act requires that these rights be posted in schools, shelters, and other locations where homeless children, families, and unaccompanied youth are found. The act also requires that districts ensure that parents of children and youth experiencing homelessness are fully informed of their children's educational rights. Consider these free NCHE resources (up to 25 per product) to assist you in creating awareness.

Posters

NCHE provides posters on the educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness. Posters are available in parent and youth versions.

Parent Pack Pocket Folders

These sturdy folders provide parents experiencing homelessness a place to keep important records and documents related to their children's education. The folder also includes information on the rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness and helpful tips on enrollment and disenrollment.



Parent Pack Pocket Folder

Parent Brochures

These bi-fold brochures list the educational rights of children experiencing homelessness and tips for what parents can do to assist their children in transitioning to a new school.

¿Se Habla Español?

These and other NCHE products are available in English and Spanish.

Hard Copy or Electronic?

Most NCHE products are available in electronic and hard copy format. Visit www.serve.org/nche/online_order.php to download electronic copies* or order these and other NCHE products.

*Parent Pack pocket folders are available in hard copy only.

NCHE HelpLine

800-308-2145 or homeless@serve.org



The NCHE HelpLine is available to assist Local Homeless Education Liaisons, State Coordinators, parents, unaccompanied youth, and others interested in issues affecting the education of children and youth in homeless situations.

The HelpLine is operational from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM EST, and provides assistance in English and Spanish. Staff members assist callers with issues such as determining the eligibility of a student to be served under the McKinney-Vento Act, overcoming enrollment barriers, serving unaccompanied youth, and more.

If you are not sure how the McKinney-Vento Act applies to your situation or role, call the NCHE HelpLine at 800-308-2145 or e-mail homeless@serve.org.